

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING No. 10, November 28, 1975

Present: Breitman, Gersh, Hansen, Jenness, Lovell,
Seigle, Thomas

Visitor: Lyons

Chair: Thomas

AGENDA: 1. Coalition of Labor Union Women Convention
2. Desegregation Campaign in Teachers Union
3. Branch Divisions
4. Membership
5. Correction in Political Committee Minutes

1. COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN

(Jaquith invited for this point.)

Jaquith reported on progress of preparations for
CLUW convention.

Discussion

Motion: To approve the report.

Carried.

2. DESEGREGATION CAMPAIGN IN TEACHERS UNION

Lovell reported on progress of desegregation cam-
paign in teachers unions (see attached).

Discussion

3. BRANCH DIVISIONS

Jenness reported on discussions in Los Angeles,
Oakland-Berkeley, San Francisco, Boston, and Seattle
about branch divisions.

Discussion

4. MEMBERSHIP

Jenness reported on proposal to accept M.P. into
membership in the party as an at-large member in
Richmond, Va. (See attached correspondence.)

Motion: To accept M.P. into membership in the party
as an at-large member in Richmond, Va.

Carried.

Jenness reported on recommendation of Chicago West-
North branch that S.L. be readmitted into membership
in the party.

Discussion

Motion: To concur with the recommendation of the Chicago West-North branch that S.L. be readmitted into membership in the party.

Carried.

5. CORRECTION IN POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Jeness reported that minutes of Political Committee meeting no. 7, November 6, 1975, should be corrected to show that the motion that Peter Camejo not run in the Peace and Freedom primary carried.

Agreement: To send correspondence with Peace and Freedom Party to National Committee (see attached).

Meeting Adjourned.

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
November 26, 1975

TO ALL BRANCH ORGANIZERS

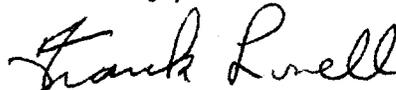
Dear Comrades,

The enclosed material from AFT members in California describes the beginning of a national campaign to reverse the AFT's position on busing. In addition to comrades who are teachers, you should consider informing other AFT members in your area of this campaign and enlist their support as indicated in the November 21 letter from Jeff Mackler.

In many cities the teachers are represented by National Education Association affiliates. If you know teachers who belong to the NEA, they should also be informed of the need for their organization to launch a campaign for school busing similar to that in the AFT. We expect that such a campaign will begin shortly in the Houston Education Association, but resolutions similar (not identical) to the AFT resolution can be adopted by NEA chapters in many parts of the country and forwarded to the NEA national office.

Please let us know what your prospects are, the number of teachers you know, and the initial response to this campaign in the teachers' unions.

Comradely,



Frank Lovell
SWP National Office

URGENT!

November 21, 1975

To: SWP Branch Organizer
Trade Union Director
AFT Comrades
NEA Comrades

From: Jeff Mackler, Oakland-Berkeley Branch

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to inform you of the progress we have made on the campaign initiated by the Political Committee in relation to the issues of desegregation, equality in education and bilingual education in the AFT. (See Oct. 1 Political Comm. mailing). Enclosed you will find a resolution entitled Desegregation and Equality in Education. Our teacher fraction will make every effort to pass this resolution at the coming AFT Convention in Miami, Florida this summer.

In order to accomplish this task we are helping to form a national AFT Committee on Desegregation and Equality in Education. The first job is to secure endorsement of the above resolution and committee from AFT officers throughout the country.

At least 30 AFT Presidents in California will endorse and Bill Simons, President of the Washington D.C. Local 6 has agreed to endorse and support the work of the committee. Simons has also agreed to secure endorsement of AFT leaders in his area.

At this point we want AFT comrades to secure the endorsement and support of the resolution from as many AFT officers from locals in your area as possible. As soon as we have a broadly representative list, we will send the enclosed resolution, along with the endorsers, to all AFT locals in the U.S. (approximately 1,000).

Where possible, comrades should try to get AFT Presidents to endorse. If this cannot be done a key officer will suffice. It is not necessary at this time to present the resolution to the local as a whole, unless this is absolutely necessary to secure endorsement. Our immediate task is to get as many individual endorsers as possible. When the resolution is sent to all AFT locals, we will want to raise it and related activities before the membership. The following should be explained to all endorsers.

1. The purpose of the AFT Committee on Desegregation and Equality in Education is to pass the enclosed resolution before the AFT Convention since last year's Hawaii Convention failed to take any stand on busing.

2. The Committee will communicate on a regular basis with all AFT locals in an effort to secure support for the resolution. To this end, the Committee will publish a newsletter and other related materials. A booth will be set up at the Miami Convention to win support for the resolution.

3. Endorsers' names will appear on the letterhead of the Committee. Additional names will be added as the committee broadens.

4. The coordination of the work of the committee will take place in California where more than 30 AFT locals will endorse. (15 already.)

When the national mailing is sent, it will include a cover letter from all the endorsers with the following suggestion:

1. Pass the resolution before your local and send it to the AFT National Convention.

2. Set up a committee in your local to support desegregation and busing struggles in your school district.

3. Secure support for the resolution from neighboring AFT locals.

4. Introduce the resolution to your State Federation with a provision that it should be sent to the National Convention.

5. Submit articles for publication in the newsletter of the AFT Committee on Desegregation and Equality in Education.

Obviously, many AFT locals will not set up such formal committees. Others, like Boston and New York (UFT) will be hostile to the project. In these cases comrades may choose to form an ad hoc committee of the local to secure support for the resolution. In New York, for example, comrades working in an ad hoc committee may be able to get hundreds of endorsers which we can publicize at the AFT Convention. Comrades may choose to circulate petitions for a union referendum on the resolution.

Work on this project affords us a tremendous opportunity to meet the best militants in the AFT and to work with them on a regular basis. In addition, we will broaden opportunities to work with anti-racist fighters in other unions and struggles on this issue.

Like our work on the AFT Vietnam Committee and the Right to Vote Committee in the Railway Union, we will introduce our programmatic ideas which are key to the building of a class struggle left wing in the unions.

Please call me with the endorsers you secure as soon as possible.

Comradely,
/s/
Jeff Mackler
1921 Oak View Drive
Oakland, California 94602

(415) 530-1031 or 530-1035

AFT COMMITTEE ON DESEGREGATION AND EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Desegregation and Equality in Education

- WHEREAS, public education in the United States is under severe and sustained attack including massive teacher cutbacks, increased class size, curtailment or elimination of free lunch programs, remedial programs and bilingual education, and,
- WHEREAS, a key aspect of this attack on public education is the virulent racist drive to retain segregated, substandard schools in violation of federal law and court orders, and
- WHEREAS, teachers, their students and the parents are the first direct victims of the attempt to lower educational standards and maintain segregated schools, and,
- WHEREAS, we in the teaching profession are convinced by training and experience that massive federal funding is necessary to maintain and improve education; that students of all races suffer from segregated schools; that without desegregation, education will deteriorate further; and that segregated housing patterns in metropolitan centers and in many districts make busing for the purpose of desegregation necessary, and,
- WHEREAS, Black students bused to desegregated schools have been violently attacked by racist mobs, often with minimal or no protection from local, state, or national authorities, and
- WHEREAS, the 1975 AFL-CIO Convention reaffirmed its support to busing to desegregate public schools, and,
- WHEREAS, the AFT has supported busing in National Convention resolutions in past years,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The AFT affirm its support for busing to achieve desegregated schools and help achieve equal educational opportunity.
2. The AFT continue to support all efforts for massive federal funding of public education, including remedial and bilingual education programs, as the only means to raise the standard of education and improve the classroom conditions of teachers and students.
3. The AFT encourage its local affiliates to actively support and participate in efforts to desegregate public schools through busing.
4. The AFT publish this resolution in the American Teacher.

I endorse the above resolution.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address (Zip)</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Position</u>
1.			
2.			

AFT COMMITTEE ON DESEGREGATION AND EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

1921 Oak View Drive
Oakland, Ca. 94602
(415) 530-1035

November 21, 1975

William Simons, President
Washington Teachers Union
AFT Local 6, AFL-CIO
1150 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Bill,

Enclosed is a copy of the resolution I read to you on the phone on Friday regarding School Desegregation.

At this point we want to secure a broadly representative group of endorsements from AFT officers throughout the country. This group will then constitute the initial endorser list which will sponsor a national mailing to all AFT locals.

The purpose of the AFT Committee on Desegregation and Equality in Education is to win support for the resolution at the coming Miami National Convention. To this end we hope to publish a regular national newsletter and eventually a newspaper. These publications would highlight the progress of the committee and contain articles on the issues it's confronting.

I would greatly appreciate your support of the project. In particular, if your local could take responsibility for coordinating work on the resolution on the east coast, it would be extremely helpful. Such coordination would include securing endorsements from nearby locals, assistance in national mailings, providing speakers to other locals and similar activities.

I am certain that the great majority of AFT locals are not pleased with AFT's failure to take a position on busing at our Hawaii Convention. If we begin a carefully organized campaign now I feel we can reverse this position this summer.

I am sending a copy of the resolution to an old friend in your local, Eric Martel. Eric worked with me several years ago at the Minnesota Convention on the Vietnam Resolution which was successful. I hope Eric will join with you and others in winning AFTers to supporting an honest position on school desegregation and busing.

As we are trying to begin the project with a national mailing in the next few weeks, I plan to call you in mid-week for your final approval. Perhaps you can contact a few nearby AFT leaders and request the use of their name on the initial mailing.

Thanks again for your help.

In unity,
s/ Jeff Mackler
Organizer, AFT 1423 Hayward,
Coordinator, AFT Committee on
Desegregation and Equality in
Education

(415) 530-1035

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copy

Washington, D.C.
November 24, 1975

Doug Jenness
New York

Dear Doug,

This is a report on a discussion I had with Michael Pennock in Richmond. I spoke with him for about four hours on Saturday at his apartment there. First, on his background. Michael is in his early 30s and has been interested in radical politics for some time. He attended Michigan State University and was active in the antiwar movement there. Up until recently he has lived in Charlotte, N.C. where he taught kindergarden in a public school and was an active member of an AFT local. In fact he initiated a resolution in support of desegregation and federal troops to Boston. In addition, Michael was active in support of Joanne Little. He attended the first day of her trial in Raleigh where he heard Willie Mae speak.

Two months ago Michael and his wife Kathy moved to Richmond where he is now teaching and is an active member of the Richmond Education Association (the NEA affiliate). Michael is quite excited about the situation in the union, and it is clear that this is the main area of his political activity.

The REA is participating in a coordinated drive for union recognition with 40 NEA locals throughout the state. This occurs in the context of a major offensive of the Democratic and Republican parties and the media against collective bargaining rights for public employees. This was the major issue in the November elections and is a central political issue statewide. Michael sees the likelihood of a major confrontation with the NEA on this question during the winter and spring.

Despite the fact that he has only been in Richmond two months, he is one of seven district captains in the REA, is an alternate to the union's delegated assembly, and functions actively on the Political Action Committee and the Crisis Committee (which formulates recommendations on the recognition drive).

Michael has been reading the Militant regularly for over two years and I was quite surprised at how familiar he is with the program and activities of the party. When I asked him what made him ask to join the party, he explained that he had been looking around at the various tendencies for some time and that over the last year, through reading the Militant and finding out about the activities that the party is involved in, he began to conclude that the SWP was the party for him.

He said that what firmly convinced him was reading the political resolution reprinted in the ISR. He went and got his copy and brought it into the room where we were talking to discuss it. He

said that "this right here hits the nail on the head." It's clear that he studied the resolution very carefully because it was all marked up with underlining, writing in the margin, etc. We proceeded to discuss it, particularly the sections on public employees and the New York City crisis.

Other than the Militant, he hasn't read much of our literature. However, he has read the busing pamphlet and a few on Black liberation that he once picked up in the Atlanta bookstore. I brought him ten or so copies of all of our free literature and sold him History of American Trotskyism, What Socialists Stand For, and America's Road to Socialism. Also, I made some suggestions on other things he should read from the Pathfinder catalog we sent him.

In my discussion with him I outlined what our attitude has been toward at-large membership in the party. I raised the possibility of him joining the YSA. However, understandably, he felt uncomfortable with this idea as his main field of political activity is in the union and it would be difficult for him to function on campus. I'm convinced that this would not be the best approach. In addition to the consideration he raises, the YSA does not have any type of base in Richmond at this time. Although we have a few YSA contacts, there are no YSAers in Richmond.

Through the discussion, it also became clear that it would be unrealistic to expect him to move to an area where an established branch exists. He has only been in Richmond two months, and is just settling down in a personal sense. But, most importantly, because he is very excited about the union activity he is carrying out and the role he can play in it.

He wants to be in the SWP not only because he agrees with our program and sees the need for a revolutionary party, but also because he understands that the experience of the SWP in the union movement can be applied to his situation. He correctly sees that this can best be accomplished by joining the party.

At any rate, the way I left it with him is that any decision on his application for membership is in the hands of the Political Committee, and that I would inform the National Office of his specific situation and we would get back to him later.

But this question aside, we discussed at length how the D.C. branch could collaborate with him in the next few months. We discussed the following:

- 1) We will send him regular mailings on our activities in D.C. as well as information on the YSA convention which he hopes to attend.
- 2) He plans to come up to D.C. for the weekend of Dec. 13 to attend a forum, participate with us in our intervention into the picket line and rally for the Post strikers scheduled for

that Saturday, and a meeting with Erich and Anne on work in the AFT and NEA which will give him ideas for his activity in Richmond.

3) That in Richmond he would proceed by carrying out discussions with people he knows about the SWP--circulating Bills of Rights, selling some Militants, circulating the party political resolution, etc. I gave him a list of contacts we have in the Richmond area who he will be contacting. Unfortunately, I didn't get much of a chance to talk with Kathy, but she does seem interested. She plans to come to D.C. with Michael in December. At this time, however, Michael sees no immediate possibilities for recruitment, but indicated that in the union there are some people that would be open to discussing the campaign. In the union he will be cautious in this and feels most comfortable with a low-key approach, at least initially.

4) He agreed to collaborate and help us out in our efforts to get on the ballot in Virginia in '76. He was excited about the prospect.

Finally, in my opinion we should take Michael into the party as an at-large member. He strikes me as very serious, stable and level-headed. He seems eager to study further and develop politically. I discussed with him the organizational concepts of the party, democratic centralism, our norms, the security policy, and he seems clear on all of this.

Regardless of what we do immediately on the question of his membership, we will be collaborating with him from here as closely as possible.

Let me know what you decide on this.

Comradely,
s/ Mark Ugolini
Washington D.C. organizer

P.S.: He should be put on the national campaign mailing list. Also, he has requested 50 Bills of Rights and a bundle of four Militants. Also, he indicated to me that he ordered \$1.50 worth of buttons which he hasn't received yet.

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14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
November 28, 1975

Michael Pennock
Richmond, Virginia

Dear Michael,

The Political Committee voted today to accept your application to the SWP as a member-at-large. There is a \$1.00 initiation fee and monthly dues are \$2.00, which should be paid directly to the national office.

You will receive regular mailings from the national office, the Militant business office, Pathfinder Press, and the national campaign committee.

Enclosed is a copy of the SWP constitution. Also enclosed is a copy of a letter from Frank Lovell to party branches with correspondence relating to our efforts to help get desegregation committees going in the AFT. We are also attempting to conduct a similar effort in the NEA and our comrades in Houston are taking the lead in this. You may have some useful suggestions in this respect that you could communicate to the SWP members there. If so, write to Dan Fein, c/o SWP, 1311 Montrose, Houston, Texas 77006.

We were interested and pleased to learn that it was reading the SWP political resolution that firmly convinced you to join the party. We have printed extra copies of this special issue of the ISR for distribution by the branches to prospective members, friends in the unions and community organizations, etc., in order to help win more members. We are also soliciting comments about this resolution from both members and non-members that we can print in subsequent issues of the ISR. You should consider writing up a few comments about the impact the resolution made on you. I think it might prove useful in helping to win other readers to our movement.

Mark Ugolini reported that you ordered 50 Bill of Rights for Working People, a bundle of 4 Militants, and \$1.50 worth of buttons. I checked on all of these orders and they're on their way.

Warmest greetings,
/s/
Doug Jenness
SWP National Office

cc: Mark Ugolini

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Arleta, California
October 23, 1975

Peter Camejo
c/o Socialist Workers
National Campaign Committee
14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014

Dear Peter:

At the National Convention of the Peoples Party earlier this year, I discussed with you the possibility of running in the California Peace and Freedom Party primary. As AB 59, a bill which gives PFP its own section of the elections code to govern the party structure and presidential primary, has now passed, I am able to explain the method by which you could qualify for our primary ballot.

Our primary is divided into two sections. The first section is a strictly preferential vote in which the candidates are placed on the ballot by the Secretary of State who must consult with the chairpeople of the State and County Central Committees of the Party in determining who to select. I believe that you could be placed on this section of the ballot if I (as L.A. Chairperson of the PFP) were to indicate that you have support within the party to the Secretary of State.

The second section of the primary ballot is for delegate selection. A slate of delegates pledged to a candidate or unpledged may be listed on this portion of the ballot by petitioning. I would, however, suggest that you not compete for delegates to avoid charges of a takeover attempt.

Initial private discussions which I have had with other PFP activists seem favorable to your entering the preferential primary. This weekend we will have a more formal discussion of the presidential campaign and I will bring the subject up there and inform you of the conclusions.

For peace, freedom, and socialism,
/s/
Jan Tucker

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SOCIALIST WORKERS
1976 NATIONAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

November 28, 1975

Jan Tucker
Arleta, California

Dear Jan,

Peter Camejo received your letter of October 23 and asked me to answer it. I'm sorry to be so late in doing so.

We, of course, appreciate your interest in the Camejo-Reid campaign and are eager to talk to as many Peace and Freedom Party supporters as possible and to work with you on activities of common interest.

However, we don't believe that it would be in the best interests of our campaign to have Peter's name placed on the PFP preferential primary ballot. As we've explained in articles in the Militant, (see enclosed), we don't believe that the PFP represents a break from capitalist politics. Thus, for one of our candidates to have their name placed on the PFP primary ballot would serve to confuse people whom we are trying to convince about the need for independent working class political action. This question is central to all of our campaigns.

We recognize that you probably disagree with this, but I wanted to bring to your attention our reasons for opposing the placement of Peter's name on the PFP ballot.

As you know, the California SWP is challenging the present discriminatory petitioning laws in court. The Committee for Democratic Election Laws is organizing support for this effort and expect a decision later in December.

Thanks for writing.

Fraternally,
s/ Doug Jenness
Campaign Director
Socialist Workers '76 National
Campaign Committee

cc: Bruce Marcus
California Socialist Workers
party Campaign Director